

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
www.sbcounty.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 31, 2006

For more information, contact
David Wert, Public Information Officer
(909) 387-4082
dwert@sbcounty.gov

Supervisor Gonzales eager to join First 5 Commission

The Board of Supervisors on Tuesday will consider appointing Fifth District Supervisor Josie Gonzales as a member of the First 5 San Bernardino Commission.

"I'm looking forward to providing much-needed First 5 local services to all of our San Bernardino County communities," Supervisor Gonzales said. "I am determined to make First 5 a vital player as a result of the public community conversations that have taken place that stress the needs of our children."

If appointed, Supervisor Gonzales would succeed Supervisor Paul Biane, who is leaving the First 5 Commission because of scheduling conflicts associated with his expanding role with the California State Association of Counties.

First 5 San Bernardino, established through the California Children and Families First Act of 1998, has initiated numerous programs with partnering service agencies to optimize early childhood development.

San Bernardino County receives an allocation of approximately \$25 million each year from a statewide, 50-cent tax on tobacco products. Since the Commission's inception, thousands of children prenatal to age five and their families have benefited from the quality services provided through this program.

Research shows that a child's brain develops most dramatically in the first five years of life and what parents and caregivers do during these years to support their child's growth will have a meaningful impact throughout life.

-MORE-

Supervisor Gonzales

March 31, 2006

Page 2

The role of the Children and Families Commission is to annually review and revise the agency's strategic plan, hold public hearings, maintain an advisory committee, and provide local leadership for early childhood issues, including service integration and capacity building. The Commission also provides direction in fund allocation, contract and fiscal management and program evaluation.

Supporting Gonzales on the Commission will be Cheryl Brown, Publisher of the Black Voice News; Dr. Eric Frykman, Public Health Officer of the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health; Barron Wilson, CEO of Alpha Connection Youth & Family Services; Linda Haugan, Assistant County Administrator for Human Services, and Jessica Weisbart, a teacher with the Chino Unified School District.

"We are very pleased at the prospect of working closely with Supervisor Gonzales and her staff," said First 5 San Bernardino Executive Director Richard Jarvis. "We are confident Supervisor Gonzales will build upon the tradition of her predecessor, Supervisor Biane, and help the First 5 Children and Families Commission to be responsive to the needs of children 0-5 and their parents in San Bernardino County."

For more information about First 5, contact First 5 at (909) 386-7706 or visit their website at www.first5sanbernardino.org.